

Image not found or type unknown

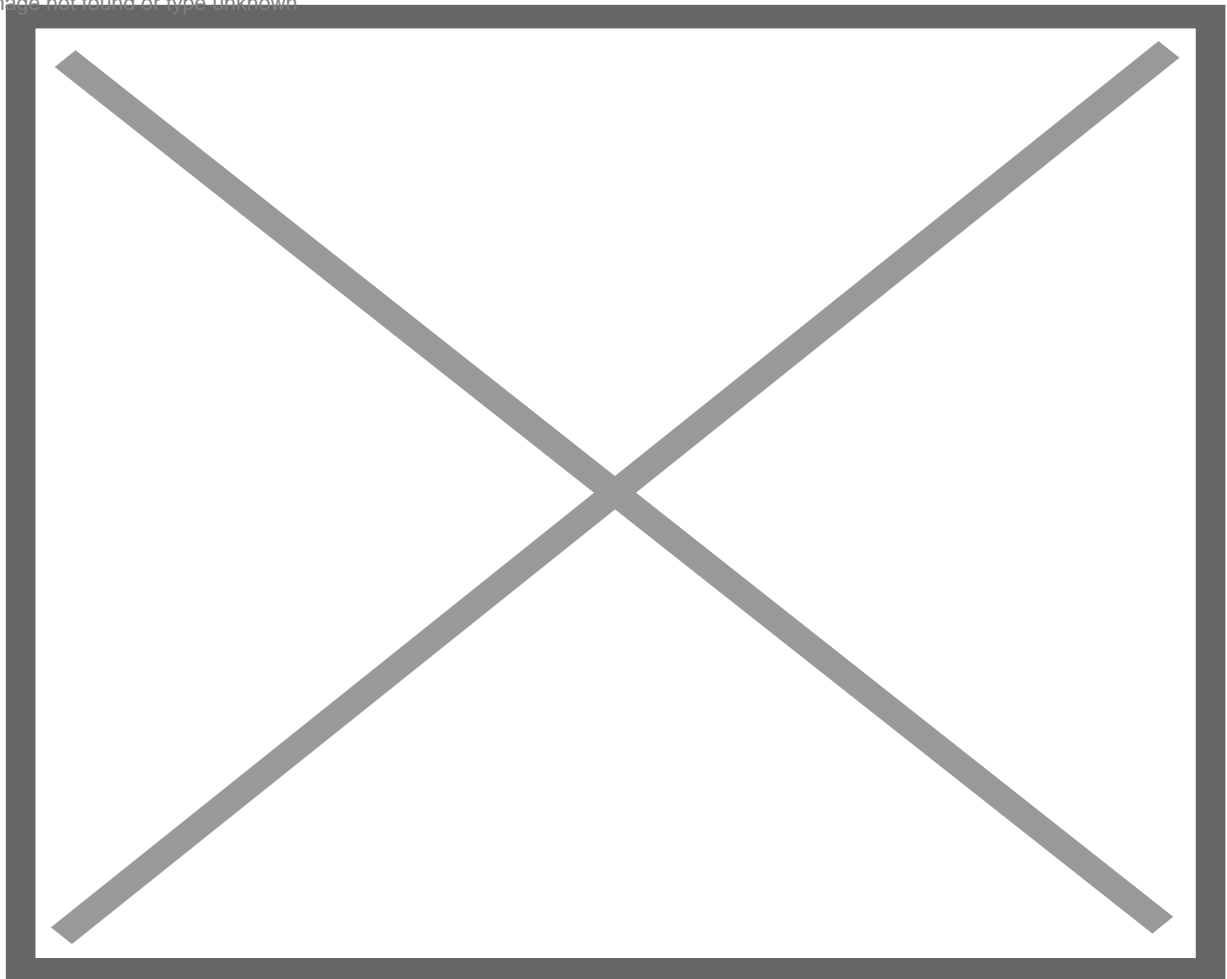
Federal Jury Convicts Two St. Thomas Men on Firearms Charges

Following a six-day trial, brothers Romeo Walter and Kenan Thomas were found guilty of federal and local firearms charges, with sentencing scheduled for October

Crime / **Published On June 26, 2024 04:50 AM /**

Staff Consortium **June 26, 2024**

Image not found or type unknown



Mugshot of Kenan Thomas (no VIPD mugshot of Romeo Walter on file) By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — United States Attorney Delia L. Smith announced today that a federal jury convicted Romeo Walter, 42, and Kenan Thomas, 37, of St. Thomas, of federal and local firearms charges following a six-day trial.

Federally, Walter and Thomas were convicted on felon in possession of firearms, and locally, the brothers were convicted on unauthorized possession of firearms. Chief District Judge Robert A. Molloy scheduled the defendants' sentencing for October 25, 2024.

According to evidence admitted at trial, on April 8, 2020, V.I. Police Department officers were patrolling the Hospital Ground neighborhood in St. Thomas due to recent shootings, including a homicide earlier the same day. The officers entered the "Jah Yard" area of Hospital Ground and pursued a group of individuals, including Walter and Thomas, after the group fled on foot. Surveillance video captured Walter, Thomas, Akeem Julien and Nijontea Walker climbing over a railing and onto the patio of a neighborhood home with two black bags. The surveillance video showed Thomas passing a handgun from his waist to Julien who then placed the gun into a black duffle bag. The footage further showed Thomas leave the patio with two bags heading in one direction, while Julien and Walter traveled in the opposite direction and Walker followed. The officers chased Thomas to a small house in Jah Yard and placed him under arrest. In Thomas' possession were two bags containing an AK-47 firearm with an obliterated serial number, a Glock 20, 10 mm handgun, a Glock 21, .45 caliber handgun, and an AR-15 firearm all loaded with numerous rounds of ammunition.

Walter, Julien, and Walker were later identified by the video surveillance. On April 19, 2020, Julien was arrested at the Cyril E. King Airport in St. Thomas attempting to board a flight to Los Angeles. He later pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number and was sentenced on November 21, 2023, to 30 months imprisonment. A reward for information led to the arrest of Walker on May 22, 2020.

Walker pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number and was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment on September 9, 2023. During the investigation, law enforcement provided a known DNA profile of Walter to compare to DNA found on the firearms which led to his arrest on September 3, 2020, in Oklahoma.

This effort is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

The case was investigated by the VIPD and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and Homeland Security Investigations and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Natasha Baker and Kyle Payne.